

DATE: October 16, 2020

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SUBJECT: Friday Update

All,

Just a couple items this week:

- Placer County LAFCO approved the Collins Annexation which will provide for the annexation of 45.3 acres near Nevada Street and the Auburn Cemetery. The project is the location for a 65 unit subdivision on approximately 28 acres of land. The balance of the land annexed includes property owned by the Auburn Cemetery District. Under Placer LAFCO Policy, the Cemetery land was included in the annexation to avoid the creation of an island, thus an undeveloped portion of property from the Cemetery District was included. LAFCO also self initiating the annexation of the remainder of Cemetery District Property into the City.
- Staff had an exceptionally productive meeting regarding the Auburn Airport in terms of real estate management, policies and coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration on the operation of the facility. The Airport has a visionary master plan and some very well coordinated groups which makes all of this a very fun process.
- Look for Staff and Recology to "talk trash" at the October 26 City Council Meeting. The waste industry is entering a very dynamic phase with new policies, programs and regulation. There is a lot to trash and we will be presenting an information item to start getting everyone up to speed on this topic.
- The big topic at the City Council Meeting was a review of the Drafts for the Housing Element and the Safety Element which are mandatory planning requirements for cities as per the State. To view both of these documents you can go here: <https://www.auburn.ca.gov/414/Housing-Safety-Element-Update>

Most of the conversation from the City Council centered around the Safety Element! The document is meant to cover the highest risks for the City and outline paths and goals to addressing those risks. In Auburn the top issues are Wildland Fire, Seismic, landslides, flood and hazardous materials.



Without question, the number one issue for Auburn is the threat of catastrophic wildfire. Our location, topography, vegetation and the very real dangers from all that surrounds Auburn make us a prime candidate for a significant fire which could have devastating results. A reality is that all which makes us a really incredible place to live also poses the greatest threats should fire occur.

Our most easterly boundaries, the canyons which border public lands and the subdivisions and business areas which are interspersed amongst the oak land areas and native creeks present significant issues which need an overall strategy to enhance the safety of both residents and the business community. On the Fire severity map included in the document, the entire eastern borders rank either "High" or "Very High" for threat severity. The good and bad news of the reports are that we have not had significant fires in the recent history (good news). The "bad news" is that these areas have considerable fuel loads which if not maintained or addressed would pose an extreme threat to the City.

One of the most difficult elements of the entire prevention effort is the combination of private and public lands which consist of these properties. Both State and Federal Agencies are not necessarily in the management of wildland fuel loads. The private land which is owned by either non-profit land trusts or individuals. Fuel breaks are expensive, costing in the range of \$5,000 per acre. The alternatives for the City are a combination of seeking voluntary compliance, enforcing mandatory compliance, seeking State or Federal funding (which has been in the works for a number of years). The areas we are talking about consist of thousands of acres, many agencies (State, Federal, Non-Profit, Private) which is a monstrous task to coordinate. The programs in the Safety Element are mostly unfunded by almost all of these agencies within the scope of the task.

Persons with comments on the Safety Element can send them to tward@auburn.ca.gov.

Thanks and have a nice weekend.

John

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